

CLAIMS

Having thus described the invention, what is claimed is:

1. An absorbent article, comprising:

- (a) a liquid permeable cover;
- (b) a liquid impermeable baffle;
- (c) an absorbent disposed between the cover and said baffle; and
- (d) a retainer flap extending over said baffle such that said baffle is between said retainer flap and said absorbent,

said absorbent article being configured for disposition primarily within the vestibule of a female wearer, said absorbent article having a central longitudinal axis, an outer edge defining a first outer perimeter of said absorbent article, a body-facing surface, and a surface opposed to the body-facing surface,

said retainer flap having a second outer perimeter, the second outer perimeter having first and second portions, the first portion being disposed proximate the first outer perimeter of said absorbent article, and being generally attached in said absorbent article at or adjacent the first outer perimeter, the second portion of the second outer perimeter of said retainer flap extending across an outer surface of said baffle whereby said retainer flap covers a portion of said baffle, the second portion of the second outer perimeter of said retainer flap being displaceable from said baffle thereby to define a first cavity between said retainer flap and said baffle.

2. An absorbent article as in Claim 1, said absorbent article having a length, said retainer flap being disposed generally on a first side of the central longitudinal axis, and extending along the length of the absorbent article

3. An absorbent article as in Claim 1, the second portion of the second outer perimeter of said retainer flap extending generally parallel to the central longitudinal axis.

4. An absorbent article as in Claim 1, the second portion of the second outer perimeter of said retainer flap extending in a direction not parallel to the central longitudinal axis.

5. An absorbent article as in Claim 1 wherein said retainer flap forms a portion of the surface opposed to the body-facing surface.

6. An absorbent article as in Claim 1, said retainer flap comprising at least about 15 percent, and up to about 50 percent, of the surface opposed to the body-facing surface of said absorbent article.

7. An absorbent article as in Claim 6, said retainer flap comprising at least about 20 percent of the surface opposed to the body-facing surface of said absorbent article.

8. An absorbent article as in Claim 1 wherein, for disposal, said absorbent article is adapted to be folded upon itself such that first and second opposing portions of the outer edge at the first outer perimeter are brought into face-to-face relationship with each other, and wherein said retainer flap is adapted to be folded over the opposing portions of the outer edge to thereby open the first cavity and define a second cavity receiving both of the first and second opposing portions of the outer edge thereinto with said absorbent article so folded, whereby said retainer flap retains the first and second opposing portions of the outer edge in the second cavity, and wherein a mid-section of said absorbent article extends outwardly from the second cavity and defines a portion of an outer surface of said absorbent article as so folded.

9. An absorbent article as in Claim 8 wherein said retainer flap is resiliently extensible and wherein resilient forces actively retract the retainer flap about the first and second opposing portions of the outer edge at the second cavity after the second cavity is fully formed with the first and second opposing portions of the outer edge in the second cavity.

10. An absorbent article as in Claim 8 wherein a first cavity portion of said absorbent article underlying the said retainer flap at the first cavity is configured such that the absorbent is retained between said baffle and said cover after said second cavity is formed.

11. An absorbent article as in Claim 1 wherein the surface opposed to the body-facing surface is defined in part by said retainer flap and in part by said baffle.

12. An absorbent article as in Claim 1 wherein the absorbent comprises superabsorbent polymer.

13. An absorbent article as in Claim 1 wherein the first portion of the second outer perimeter extends along the first outer perimeter of said absorbent article between first and second ends of the second portion of the second outer perimeter of said retainer flap, whereby said baffle and the first portion of the second outer perimeter of said retainer flap define a closed end of the first cavity.

14. An absorbent article as in Claim 1, including printed indicia on a surface which assists in defining, and which is disposed within, the first cavity.

15. An absorbent article, comprising:

- (a) a liquid impermeable baffle;
- (b) an absorbent; and
- (d) a retainer flap extending over said baffle such that said baffle is between said retainer flap and said absorbent,

said absorbent article being configured for disposition primarily within the vestibule of a female wearer, said absorbent article having a central longitudinal axis, an outer edge defining a first outer perimeter of said absorbent article, a body-facing surface, and a surface opposed to the body-facing surface,

said retainer flap having a second outer perimeter, the second outer perimeter having first and second portions, the first portion being disposed proximate the first outer perimeter of said

absorbent article, and being generally attached in said absorbent article at or adjacent the first outer perimeter, the second portion of the outer perimeter of said retainer flap extending across an outer surface of said baffle whereby said retainer flap covers a portion of said baffle, the second portion of the second outer perimeter of said retainer flap being displaceable from said baffle thereby to define a first cavity between said retainer flap and said baffle.

16. An absorbent article as in Claim 15, said absorbent article having a length, said retainer flap being disposed generally on a first side of the central longitudinal axis, and extending along the length of the absorbent article

17. An absorbent article as in Claim 15, the second portion of the second outer perimeter of said retainer flap extending generally parallel to the central longitudinal axis.

18. An absorbent article as in Claim 15, the second portion of the second outer perimeter of said retainer flap extending in a direction not parallel to the central longitudinal axis.

19. An absorbent article as in Claim 15 wherein said retainer flap forms a portion of the surface opposed to the body-facing surface.

20. An absorbent article as in Claim 15, said retainer flap comprising at least about 15 percent and up to about 50 percent of the surface opposed to the body-facing surface of said absorbent article.

21. An absorbent article as in Claim 20, said retainer flap comprising at least about 20 percent of the surface opposed to the body-facing surface of said absorbent article.

22. An absorbent article as in Claim 15 wherein, for disposal, said absorbent article is adapted to be folded upon itself such that first and second opposing portions of the outer edge at the first outer perimeter are brought into face-to-face relationship with each other, and wherein said retainer flap is

adapted to be folded over the opposing portions of the outer edge to thereby open the first cavity and define a second cavity receiving both of the first and second opposing portions of the outer edge thereinto with said absorbent article so folded, whereby said retainer flap retains the first and second opposing portions of the outer edge in the second cavity, and wherein a mid-section of said absorbent article extends outwardly from the second cavity and defines a portion of an outer surface of said absorbent article as so folded.

23. An absorbent article as in Claim 22 wherein said retainer flap is resiliently extensible and wherein resilient forces actively retract the retainer flap about the first and second opposing portions of the outer edge at the second cavity after the second cavity is fully formed with the first and second opposing portions of the outer edge in the second cavity.

24. An absorbent article as in Claim 22 wherein a first cavity portion of said absorbent article underlying said retainer flap at the first cavity is configured such that said baffle forms a corresponding portion of the surface opposing the body-facing surface after said second cavity is formed.

25. An absorbent article as in Claim 15 wherein the surface opposed to the body-facing surface is defined in part by said retainer flap and in part by said baffle.

26. An absorbent article as in Claim 15, wherein the absorbent comprises superabsorbent polymer.

27. An absorbent article, comprising:

- (a) a liquid permeable cover;
- (b) a liquid impermeable baffle;
- (c) an absorbent disposed between the cover and said baffle; and
- (d) a retainer flap extending over said baffle such that said baffle is between said retainer flap and said absorbent,

said absorbent article being configured for disposition primarily within the vestibule of a female wearer, said absorbent article having a central longitudinal axis, an outer edge defining a first outer perimeter of said absorbent article, a body-facing surface, and a surface opposed to the body-facing surface,

said retainer flap having a second outer perimeter, the second outer perimeter having first and second portions, the first portion having first and second separate and distinct sections spaced from each other and disposed proximate the first outer perimeter of said absorbent article at spaced locations on the first outer perimeter, said retainer flap being generally attached in said absorbent article at the first and second sections of the first portion of the second outer perimeter, the second portion of the second outer perimeter of said retainer flap having first and second sections thereof, spaced from each other across a width of said retainer flap and spaced from the first outer perimeter of said absorbent article, and extending across an outer surface of said baffle, thereby to define an open-ended first cavity between said retainer flap and said baffle.

28. An absorbent article as in Claim 27, said absorbent article having a length, said retainer flap being disposed generally on a first side of the central longitudinal axis, and extending along the length of the absorbent article

29. An absorbent article as in Claim 27, the first and second sections of the second portion of the second outer perimeter of said retainer flap extending generally parallel to the central longitudinal axis.

30. An absorbent article as in Claim 27, the first and second sections of the second portion of the second outer perimeter of said retainer flap extending in a direction not parallel to the central longitudinal axis.

31. An absorbent article as in Claim 27 wherein said retainer flap forms a portion of the surface opposed to the body-facing surface.

32. An absorbent article as in Claim 27, said retainer flap comprising at least about 15 percent, and up to about 40 percent, of the surface opposed to the body-facing surface of said absorbent article.

33. An absorbent article as in Claim 27 wherein, for disposal, said absorbent article is adapted to be folded upon itself such that first and second opposing portions of the outer edge at the first outer perimeter are brought into face-to-face relationship with each other, and wherein said retainer flap is adapted to be folded over the opposing portions of the outer edge to thereby open the open-ended first cavity and define an open-ended second cavity receiving both of the first and second opposing portions of the outer edge thereinto with said absorbent article so folded, whereby said retainer flap retains the first and second opposing portions of the outer edge in the open-ended second cavity, and wherein a mid-section of said absorbent article extends outwardly from the open-ended second cavity and defines a portion of an outer surface of said absorbent article as so folded.

34. An absorbent article as in Claim 33 wherein said retainer flap is resiliently extensible and wherein resilient forces actively retract the retainer flap about the first and second opposing portions of the outer edge at the second cavity after the second cavity is fully formed with the first and second opposing portions of the outer edge received in the second cavity.

35. An absorbent article as in Claim 33 wherein a first cavity portion of said absorbent article underlying the said retainer flap at the first cavity is configured such that the absorbent is retained between said baffle and said cover after said second cavity is formed.

36. An absorbent article as in Claim 27 wherein the surface opposed to the body-facing surface is defined in part by said retainer flap and in part by said baffle.

37. An absorbent article as in Claim 27 wherein the absorbent comprises superabsorbent polymer.

38. A method of hygienically preparing a labial pad for disposal, the labial pad having a body-facing surface and a surface opposing the body-facing surface, the method comprising:

- a) obtain a labial pad ready for disposal, the pad having a cover defining at least a portion of the body-facing surface, a baffle defining a portion of the surface opposing the body-facing surface, an absorbent between the cover and the baffle, and a retainer flap mounted in the labial pad and overlying a portion of the baffle such that the surface opposing the body-facing surface is defined in part by the retainer flap and in part by the baffle, the labial pad having an outer edge defining a first outer perimeter of the labial pad, the retainer flap having a second outer perimeter including a first portion secured in the labial pad at or adjacent the first outer perimeter and a second portion extending across an outer surface of the baffle, the second portion of the second outer perimeter of said retainer flap being displaceable from the baffle thereby to define a first cavity between the retainer flap and the baffle;
- b) folding the labial pad and thereby folding the body-facing surface upon itself such that first and second opposing portions of the outer edge are brought into facing relationship to each other; and
- c) folding the retainer flap over both of the folded over first and second opposing portions of the outer edge and thereby opening the first cavity and correspondingly defining a second cavity which receives therein both of the first and second facing opposing portions of the outer edge, with the labial pad in the folded condition, whereby the retainer flap assists in retaining the first and second facing opposing portions of the outer edge in the second cavity.

39. A method as in Claim 38 wherein a first cavity portion of the absorbent article underlying the retainer flap at the first cavity comprises the baffle forming a corresponding portion of the surface opposing the body-facing surface after the second cavity is formed.

40. A method as in Claim 38 wherein the retainer flap is resiliently extensible, the method including resiliently stretching the retainer flap while folding the retainer flap over the folded over first and second opposing portions of the outer edge, and whereby residual resilient forces in the retainer flap actively retract the retainer flap about the first and second opposing portions of the outer edge at the second cavity after the second cavity is fully formed with the first and second opposing portions of the outer edge in the second cavity.